

A University in Recovery



by Robert L. Carothers, Ph.D., President, University of Rhode Island



Editor's note: The following is an excerpt from a presentation at the 80th Annual Meeting of the American Council on Education, convened February 7–10, 1998, in San Francisco, California.

For many years alcohol has been an important component of campus social life at the University of Rhode Island. It is probably fair to say that at URI, like so many other colleges and universities, the abuse of alcohol has been seen as kind of an inevitable rite of passage for college students and generally tolerated. However, as this decade began in Rhode Island, a couple of events changed that perception.

In 1990, a well-publicized rape of an intoxicated undergraduate student in one of our fraternity houses polarized the campus community on the questions both of alcohol and of fraternities. A year later, any remaining ambiguity dissipated when the 1991 commencement was so awash in alcohol among the graduates that the ceremony was disrupted, and the incident was widely reported in the local press. Those two events began to get people thinking a little differently about alcohol.

I arrived in Kingston in the fall of 1991. That year we expelled the fraternity involved in the rape case, and we banned the use of kegs at any fraternity parties or other social events on the campus. But the alcohol culture per-

sisted at large parties, both on and off campus, accompanied, predictably, by injuries and assaults.

Enforcement of the existing alcohol policy was weak. Our alcohol abuse task force worked for two years developing recommendations about what to do. I received those recommendations, thanked the task force, and filed them away. At the time, I was concerned that taking an unpopular stand would only highlight the problem, giving it greater visibility to the public and damaging the reputation of the University even more. I didn't want to risk student reaction to changing the way of life they had come to enjoy. And, I was afraid of the alumni. In short, I was in denial.

In 1992, our centennial year, we made a public commitment to change URI—to build what we called in our vision statement "a new culture for learning." But this was about academics, and we neither advocated for nor made any changes in our alcohol policy. We did not really understand at that time how achieving that new culture for learning would be impacted by this problem of alcohol.

Then two "cataclysmic" events occurred. In 1993 and

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1994, the *Princeton Review* named URI as the number one party school in America, and everything changed. In 1993, the report on binge drinking came out from the Harvard University School of Public Health. We were one of the 140 schools that had participated in that study, which reported a national binge drinking rate of 44 percent. We also learned from our own research on our incoming class that 32 percent of entering freshman self-identified as having a problem with the use of alcohol or other substances. We learned very quickly that we were perpetuating our problem by admitting and attracting students to the University because of our reputation as a party school.

As a matter of academic excellence, it became clear that we could not build the culture for learning to which we aspired when a very significant percentage of our student body had their minds fogged by alcohol and other substances. As if by way of punctuation, the jury in the 1990 rape case awarded the victim a judgment of \$750,000 against the university and the now defunct fraternity, saying that the University had not done all we could to protect her from this assault.

In the summer of 1995, we made the hard decision to go into recovery, to acknowledge publicly the nature and scope of our alcohol and drug problems, and to establish programs that would confront those problems. That included banning the serving of alcohol at all social functions on the Kingston, Narragansett, and Providence campuses. We did not ban the private use of alcohol by students of legal age, yet we knew that the result would be a firestorm of indignation from these decisions—and it was.

Key components of our approach included a better alcohol and other drug policy that would be strongly and repeatedly articulated. We established a system whereby students were fined \$50 for the first violation and \$100 for the second. The third violation meant suspension for at least two semesters. We made the commitment to enforce that policy and have stuck with it. We have our own "three strikes and you're out" rule and have been diligent in maintaining it.

We also added a better training program that included more education for our staff, resident assistants, fraternity and sorority presidents, chapter advisors, house parents, coaches, and faculty members

aimed at the identification, intervention, and referral of students, faculty, and staff who have alcohol problems.

We had very significant resistance to our policies in 1995, including student protests led by the fraternities. We had more violence on campus that fall as people acted out their frustration and anger. A number of our fraternities engaged in open defiance, which resulted in our shutting down four fraternity houses.

In addition, residents of the community adjacent to the university were worried that the policy change would simply drive parties off the campus and into their neighborhoods. They were very much concerned about what they feared would be increased drunk driving in the areas around the campus. We spent a lot of time trying to deal with those issues. But all the research we have done suggests that there have been no increases in off-campus parties and drunk driving. (There weren't any decreases either.)

Surprisingly, we had resistance from some of our faculty and administrators and, particularly, from our development staff, who were trying to understand how they would hold various receptions and parties without alcohol. After many heated discussions with faculty members and my own development staff, I came to believe that if we didn't have a clear message that we were not going to use alcohol, even at events at the President's house, then we would lose that struggle.

But public support turned out to be very strong, with lots of publicity and declarations of support for what many people perceived was a statement of what we stood for as a community and what we wouldn't stand for. Parents wrote to express their support, and people sent us money from all over the country. A man in Los Angeles sent us a \$1,000 check, writing, "I want you to know that I support what you are trying to accomplish." After a while I began to see what we were doing as a potential fund-raising strategy!

Where we are today is a result of seven years in this recovery process. We still have a problem. We have not by any stretch of the imagination eliminated alcohol abuse in our community, but we are working on it—in the tradition of recovery—one day at a time. Each year, it has gotten a little easier, as we move through the University those students who



expected to be able to abuse alcohol and other substances. Three undergraduate classes now at the university were not here when another way of life prevailed. And our campus culture has significantly changed, evidenced by simple things like the relative absence of beer can litter around the campus.

Although students are still drinking in a variety of other places, I think the culture of student life has improved. Applications for admissions to the University are up, not only in number but also very significantly in the quality of students. Since 1994, SAT scores have increased 140 points on average. We have fewer cases of alcohol poisoning—a fact that we have been able to document both at the local hospital and at our campus medical facility. On the other hand, our fraternity system is in deep trouble, and I am not at all sure that they are going to be able to make the transition to a different culture.

We have no more alcohol sponsors for athletics events. We have no alcohol at development events on the campus. Alumni are generally happy with all this, and giving has increased. But perhaps most importantly, we have gained some sort of moral authority in dealing with a whole variety of other issues because we have taken what is regarded as a moral position on this issue.

We have tough issues still to address. For example, Homecoming remains an event that belies what it is we have tried to say through our alcohol program. We have a variety of challenges to overcome if we are going to behave consistently and to send clear messages to our students about what our values are. But it has been quite a ride. And we now know that what is most important is that we stay the course and keep the messages clear.

Montana: A Work in Progress

The state of Montana recently launched a statewide initiative targeting drinking by all 18 to 25 year olds across the state. The initiative focuses on specific subpopulations, including college students, to attempt to reflect Montana's diversity. Jeff Linkenbach, Ed.D., an assistant professor in Montana State University's Department of Health and Human Development and a Center Associate, directs this ambitious initiative, which includes a social marketing campaign designed to *de-normalize* high-risk drinking. The campaign will use market research techniques to identify the channels of communications, but expects to rely heavily on print materials and radio public service announcements.

Although the campaign will utilize a social marketing strategy as its focal point, the project intends to use media advocacy strategies that seek to reshape the overall social environment in which the media message is being presented.

"The social marketing campaign is like the product that we have displayed in the shop window. But what we really want is for people to come into the store and look at all of our other wares, to buy several, and then tell their friends," explains Linkenbach.

With a three-year funding commitment from the Montana Department of Transportation's Highway Safety Bureau and technical assistance and training support from the Higher Education Center,

Linkenbach is creating a statewide initiative called the Montana Youth and Young Adult Positive Social Norming Campaign for Reducing Alcohol-Related Crashes.

The program's goal is to develop, implement, and evaluate a long-term public information and education program. The program will utilize a positive social norms approach designed to reduce by 5 percent alcohol-related vehicle crashes involving 18 to 25 year olds across the state of Montana by January 2000.

The program also wants to raise the age of onset of alcohol use and decrease the frequency of alcohol use, especially among adolescents. At present, 65 percent of Montana's populations start drinking before age 15. The current rates of "binge drinking"—defined as having five or more drinks on an occasion for males, four or more for females—are 40 percent for teens, 20 percent for those 18 and older, and 40–48 percent for college students.

Linkenbach has already rallied Montana's governor and key higher education leaders from around the state to make a commitment to reducing harmful drinking among college students and others through campus and community teams. At a March meeting of the Board of Regents Montana's university presidents signed pledges to make the fight against high-risk drinking a priority on their campus and to enter

into campus and community coalitions as part of their prevention efforts.

Montana recently completed a statewide, random phone survey of 500 people in the 18- to 24-year-old age group. The survey assesses perceptions versus "reality" on various drinking and driving issues, as well as protective factors regarding impaired driving, such as designated driver programs. Results of the survey are currently being analyzed. Findings from focus groups will inform positive media messages about the benefits of healthy lifestyles. For the college population targeted by the initiative, Montana media messages will be based on the results of the Core Survey.

The Center is providing support to the Montana initiative through a series of activities. Through the development of the Montana program, Linkenbach is now helping other states interested in developing similar initiatives. For more information on the Montana initiative, Linkenbach can be reached at (406) 994-7873 or by e-mail at jwl@montana.edu.

For information on other statewide initiatives or to report on your own experience, please contact Joel Epstein at the Higher Education Center at (800) 676-1730, ext. 2393, or by e-mail at jepstein@edc.org





Report from the Field

Putting Research Results to Work

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools sponsored Putting Research Results to Work: Creating the Next Generation of College Prevention Policies and Programs, a special meeting to look at the state of research in alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention in higher education. Of critical concern to the Department is that the relative lack of good evaluation research continues to impede program and policy development to prevent student AOD use.

In late May in Washington, D.C., 45 researchers, prevention specialists, and higher education officials were brought together to consider and debate recommendations for future research and prevention activities. Primary objectives for the meeting were as follows: (1) review the current scope and extent of alcohol and other drug use (AOD) on college campuses; (2) review recent AOD prevention research findings and identify gaps; (3) propose needed research and evaluation methods; and (4) identify innovative AOD prevention strategies.

A number of researchers presented findings from their latest studies. Phil Meilman, Ph.D., from Cornell University and the Core Institute at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, reported aggregate data from 89,874 Core Surveys administered on 171 campuses during 1995 and 1996. He highlighted the relationship between binge drinking and various forms of aggression, violence, and harassment, and distributed the latest Core Institute publication, which covers this topic in depth. He emphasized the need for the field to reflect the alcohol situation on campuses accurately, rather than to sensationalize the problem.

Findings from the Monitoring the Future study, which is directed by Lloyd Johnston, Ph.D., of the University of Michigan, indicate that alcohol and other drug use seems to be driven by student perceptions of the danger involved. Current increases in marijuana use are associated with perceptions of less risk, which in turn affect perceptions of peer norms.

The challenge for the prevention field, says Johnston, is how to change people's underlying beliefs. If alcohol and other drugs are seen as dangerous, the peer group will disapprove.

Steven Clarke, M.S., of Virginia Tech, presented results of observational field research on the drinking behaviors of students at fraternity parties—when they drink, how they drink, how much they consume. The goal of the high-risk drinkers is intoxication. Peak party attendance occurs around midnight, but alcohol consumption, including high-risk drinking (e.g., drinking games, chugging), tends to occur earlier in the evening; many students get together with same-sex friends to drink before the party.

Other meeting participants reported findings from their studies on the impact and status of campus-based prevention efforts. David Anderson, Ph.D., of George Mason University, reported the results of the College Alcohol Survey, a survey of campus student affairs officers at four-year IHEs. According to Anderson, there has been an erosion of campus-based prevention efforts over the past six years. He cited decreases in participation across a wide range of programs, including National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week, counseling and support groups, campus-based task forces, and community coalitions.

Mary Larimer, Ph.D., presented information on the Lifestyles 94 research project at the University of Washington. Incoming freshmen were administered a questionnaire about their alcohol and other drug use. Those who indicated a relatively high level of use were given a brief personalized report that described their level of use compared with that of other students, their perceptions of drinking norms among students compared with the actual level of consumption, and other feedback; the key to the intervention was a motivational interview. Over the next two years, the students filled out mailed surveys and received additional personalized feedback. Students receiving the intervention, compared with appropriate control group stu-

dents, showed decreased alcohol use over the two-year period and a 56 percent reduction in reported alcohol-related problems.

Michael Haines, M.S., summarized his work on a social norms campaign at Northern Illinois University (NIU). The premise of the campaign is that students wildly overestimate the percentage of their peers who engage in high-risk drinking. To the extent that perceptions of behavioral norms affect individual student behavior, these misperceived norms will drive up alcohol consumption. Haines stated that the goal of his work is to make students aware of the "real" norms of alcohol use through a media campaign, which in turn will drive down consumption. Coincidental with this campaign, NIU has seen a dramatic decrease in reported high-risk drinking. The "binge drinking" rate in 1988 was 43.2 percent; by 1995 it had dropped to 27.7 percent, while nationally, the "binge drinking" rate dropped only marginally from 43.2 percent to 40.0 percent.

Ralph Hingson, Sc.D., of Boston University, reviewed his evaluation of the Saving Lives project in Massachusetts, a traffic safety program that helped reduce alcohol-related traffic crashes in six participating communities. Hingson noted that his research indicates that comprehensive, community-based efforts hold the most promise for AOD prevention. Long-term institutionalization of programs depends on having documented evidence of progress. In Hingson's view, campuses need to organize politically, and involve students in this process, to create change. Hingson's evaluation also provides a good model of the type of research demonstration projects needed to evaluate the impact of campus and community coalitions.

Among other recommendations and ideas that surfaced were that (1) sufficient resources be made available for every college and university in the country to conduct an annual Core Institute Alcohol and Drug Survey, with a random sample and adequate

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Language Matters

by William DeJong

The terminology we use has a powerful effect on what we think and feel about a problem, while also defining the boundaries of potential solutions that we will consider. In short, language matters. Here, I want to consider the prevention field's use of two terms: *binge drinking* and *responsible drinking*.

The term *binge drinking* has become the accepted catchphrase for describing high-risk alcohol consumption by U.S. college students, largely as a result of the 1994 article by Henry Wechsler, Ph.D., in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, in which he reported the results of his national survey on college student drinking.

For men, Wechsler defined binge drinking as having five or more drinks in a row on a single occasion within the past two weeks, and for women as having four or more drinks in a row. By this measure, 50 percent of men and 39 percent of women were classified by Wechsler as binge drinkers. The headlines followed.

But some in public health and on campus say that Wechsler's definition serves to distort the nature and scope of the problem, as it does not specify a time period over which the alcohol is consumed "on a single occasion." Four or five drinks "in a row" over a several-hour period does not conform to the popular notion of a "binge"—as portrayed in *Leaving Las Vegas* or *The Lost Weekend*—or even to the clinical definition.

Wechsler correctly points out, however, that students who report that level of drinking are far more likely to report a wide range of problems due to alcohol—doing something they later regretted, forgetting where they were or what they did, missing class, getting behind in their school work, arguing with friends, engaging in unplanned (and often unprotected) sexual activity, getting hurt or injured.

There is no justification for changing the survey questions that Wechsler or others use. As noted, the five-drink/four-drink demarcation is a meaningful one, even though the questions do not specify the amount of time in which the alcohol is consumed. Beyond that, however, there is a clear need to use the same questions over time, whatever their imperfections, so that trend data can be developed.

That said, I now believe there is a problem in using the term *binge drinking* to characterize the level of drinking described in the survey reports. Repeatedly, I hear college officials talk about how students, looking for a reason not to listen to concerns about alcohol use on campus, will pounce on the definition of binge drinking used in the surveys. In essence, students are saying to these officials, "If you think my having five drinks over the course of a five-hour party is a 'binge,' then you don't know what you're talking about."

Hearing this, I am coming to prefer the term *high-risk drinking*, a term favorably discussed at both the recent NAPRH meeting and the Department of Education's researchers meeting (see page 4). An additional advantage of this term is that it puts the focus on what most college administrators, parents, and students care about—the dangerous, alcohol-fueled misconduct of students who abuse alcohol.

Another frequently used term that should concern us is *responsible drinking*. For years, the alcohol industry has promoted the idea of responsible drinking with campaigns such as "Know When to Say When." When should a drinker "say when"? The advertiser never makes that clear. This is important, because research has shown that most drinkers, even those who are heavy drinkers, view their own level of drinking as "responsible."

Recently, an alcohol industry-sponsored organization published a brochure for parents of college students, with



advice about how to talk to their college-age children about drinking. The brochure offers a two-part definition for "low-risk drinking." First, someone who drinks should have no more than one drink per hour. That's good advice.

The second part of the definition is more problematic and detracts from an otherwise excellent educational brochure. It states that the maximum number of drinks for women is three, while the maximum number of drinks for men is four. It is important to note that this level of drinking is just one drink less than the "binge drinking" definition used in Wechsler's research.

Does the absence of "binge drinking" constitute "low-risk drinking"? Not according to the federal government's *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, which continues to urge men to consume no more than two drinks per day, should they choose to drink. For women, the *Guidelines* suggest not more than one drink per day. The *Guideline's* "Advice for Today" is: If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation, with meals, and when consumption does not put you or others at risk.

According to the federal government, this is what we should mean when we say "low-risk drinking." Language matters.

William DeJong, Ph.D., is director of the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention.

Correcting Misperceptions of

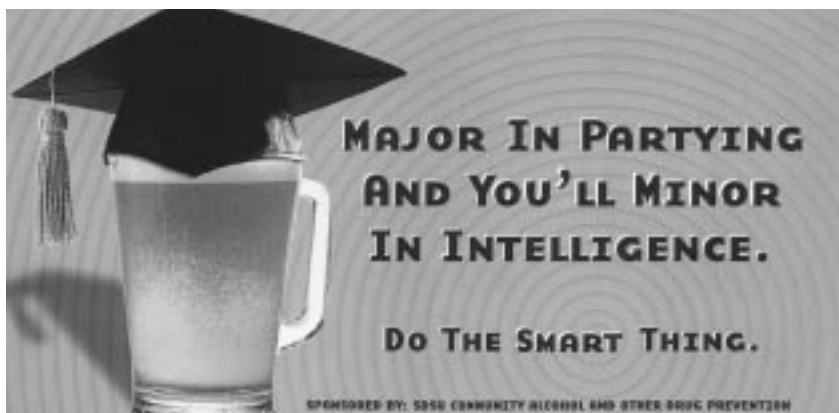
A coordinated attack on misperceptions of student alcohol and other drug use is under way at seven colleges and universities with support from the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, 1997 Grants to Institutions of Higher Education-Validation Competition.

The Department of Education, which administers the grant program, required that correcting misperceptions of the norm be a priority goal of programs considered for the 1997 grants. A second requirement was that the programs seek to limit student access to alcohol and other drugs. The overall purpose of the grant-supported projects is to prevent violent behavior and illegal use of alcohol and other drugs by students.

The grant program also requires involvement of surrounding communities in the campus prevention activities, and evaluation of the outcomes. Typically, the schools are assessing what students consider to be norms of drinking and other drug use in their peer group before and after a campus campaign, along with actual rates of student drinking and other drug use before and after.

Here are capsule summaries of the programs undertaken by the institutions that received grants in the 1997 offering:

- A 25-member Campus-Community Coalition is the centerpiece of the grant-supported program at **Barton County Community College** in Great Bend, Kansas. Students, faculty, and staff are represented in the coalition, along with such community representatives as a liquor store owner, a hospital administrator, a drug counselor, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Great Bend police department. Members of the coalition are divided into four subgroups. One is assigned to develop a server-training program for beverage retailers. Another is developing a media campaign aimed at correcting perceptions of the norm in student drinking. The third works at changing environmental factors that affect access to alcohol. The fourth will evaluate the effects of what the other subgroups do. As another measure of the effectiveness of the program, drinking patterns and perceptions of the norm at the Great Bend college will be compared with those at another college in Kansas that has a student body with similar characteristics but no comparable prevention program.



San Diego State University Prevention Poster

• The program centered at **Berkshire Community College** in Massachusetts is a unique blend of private and public colleges, both two-year and four-year, from the entire county. By providing similar assessment, education, and training activities at all five colleges, the program reaches every college student in Berkshire County. In addition, the coalition has enlisted the participation of community organizations such as the Governor's Highway Traffic Safety Bureau and the Berkshires Against Drugs agency. The consortium, known as Project ADVANCE, will foster alcohol-free social and entertainment activities and provide support to students who choose not to drink.

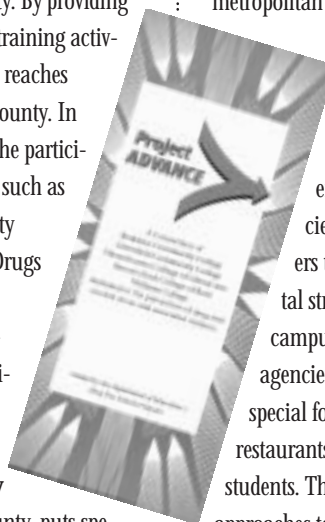
• **California State University at Northridge**, in Los Angeles County, puts special emphasis on the link between violence and alcohol and other drug use. A conference on Ending Violence Against Women was conducted on the campus for middle and high school teachers and students in the area from which Northridge draws most of its enrollment, as well as for the university community. Focus groups were conducted to test media messages on the antiviolenence theme and on misperceptions of the student drinking norm. The environmental aspect of the program focuses mainly on the business community surrounding the campus. The project's Geographic Information System (GIS) tracks incidents of violence (rape, assault, etc.) and alcohol and other drug violations both on campus and in the surrounding community. GIS computer-generated maps visually present the information by location of inci-

dents.

- The program at **San Diego State University** works extensively throughout the populous San Diego metropolitan area, which includes a border crossing where students under 21 can enter

Mexico and patronize bars where the legal drinking age is 18. The program uses a community collaborative of law enforcement personnel, prevention agencies, campus officials, bar owners, and others to develop and implement environmental strategies. Fifty-five representatives of on-campus and off-campus organizations and agencies are part of the partnership, which has a special focus on server training in bars and restaurants in beach communities popular with students. The program also uses social marketing approaches to influence students concerning social norms and risks associated with binge drinking.

- Freshmen living in residence halls are the special target in an experimental prevention effort at the **University of Arizona at Tucson**. The aim is to reduce substance abuse and violence among freshmen by correcting their misperceptions of alcohol and other drug use among their peers. Posters with the actual rates of alcohol consumption will be offered to one half of the freshmen living in residence halls. The other half will receive no posters but will be exposed, along with all students, to ads in the campus newspaper containing similar information. Freshmen receiving the poster will have an inducement to put it on the wall: an offer of a coupon good for \$5 if the poster is up when a member of the prevention team visits the hall unannounced. Surveys before and after will indi-



Norms on Seven Campuses

cate whether students who saw the poster regularly had a greater knowledge of the true drinking norms on the campus.

- The **University of California at San**

Diego's prevention team based its prevention campaign messages on extensive interviews with faculty, staff, and students and a survey of the environmental factors associated with the consumption of alcohol. Photos, clippings, and other materials were used to determine how on-campus and off-campus alcohol advertising and promotion were perceived. Messages being developed by the student team for the fall campaign were tested with focus groups. The name chosen for the student team is Celebrating Healthy Environments through the Empowerment of Responsible Students, which produces the acronym CHEERS. The campaign, to begin in the fall of 1998, will employ messages on a field shaped like a traffic warning sign.

- The WE CAN 2000 program at **Western**

Washington University combines social marketing approaches; the "stages of change" theory based on perception of risk; management of the environment in which students make decisions about drinking and other drug use; and responsible hospitality practices by beverage servers. Program staff convened focus groups to help determine the content of messages correcting misperceptions about alcohol consumption by students. Focus groups included students who are both high consumers of alcohol and too young to buy alcoholic beverages legally. Another part of the program is determining what aspects of substance-free housing are most popular with students, with an eye toward supporting and promoting those advantages. The server-training aspect of the program has been enhanced by selection of the state of Washington as one of five pilot states for development of Hospitality Resource Alliance panels bringing together public health, law enforcement, and regulatory agencies with licensed beverage associations and insurance companies.

Alcohol-Impaired Driving Prevention Awards

The first annual College and University Drinking and Driving Prevention Award program, sponsored by the Automobile Club of Southern California and the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, acknowledges promising prevention programs at colleges and universities. The regional award competition drew 16 applications from Southern California, Texas, and New Mexico. The Auto Club presented \$1,000 awards to UCSD, Texas A&M University, University of Texas at Austin, and the University of New Mexico.

UCSD's Creating Responsible Alcohol Services and Habits (CRASH) teams of students worked to reduce incidents of driving under the influence, increase the knowledge and practice of responsible beverage service, and implement integrated and consistent campus alcohol policies. According to the new UCSD survey, 28 percent of students reported binge drinking (defined as consuming five or more drinks in one sitting) and 19 percent reported driving after drinking—numbers that are down considerably from the 1994 UCSD survey.

Texas A&M's DAB (Designate a Bus) Transit

program was started by students after a survey found that 21 percent of students drink and drive and that there is little mass transit. Students, with the support of community leaders, restaurants, and bars, set up a not-for-profit venture that provides shuttle buses from campus locations and apartment complexes to entertainment areas in town.



Since 1989 the UT Austin Designated Driver program has provided free transportation by taxi and shuttle bus from the city's entertainment area to various points on campus on more than 18,000 occasions for students who are too impaired to drive.

The University of New Mexico's Alcohol Awareness and Education Program involves students who have alcohol violations in a brief educational program aimed at helping students reduce risky behavior, including drinking and driving.

For information about the fall 1998 Drinking and Driving Prevention Award competition, visit the Auto Club's Website (www.aaa-calif.com) or the Center's site (www.edc.org/hec).

Grantee Contact Information

The Center will establish links from the Center's Website to those grantees with Web addresses in the near future.

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What's Different at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)?



Students enrolled in the country's over 100 historically black colleges and universities seem to experience fewer problems related to alcohol and other drug use compared with students generally. Participants at a three-day think-tank, held in Baltimore in June, explored the many favorable characteristics that help explain the apparently lower rates of consumption and adverse consequences at HBCUs.

Attendees cautioned, however, that despite the preponderance of good news, considerable work remains to promote health and safety among students enrolled on campuses that have traditionally educated predominantly African American students. Michael Nettles, executive director of the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, an affiliate of the United Negro College Fund, told the symposium that nearly 300,000 students now attend HBCUs, the highest enrollment in history. At the same time, African Americans account for more

than 1.4 million total college enrollments, overall.

Leaders from historically black colleges and universities and national service organizations identified several important characteristics that help explain the lower rates of consumption and adverse consequences on these campuses. These characteristics include extensive support networks (both educationally and culturally), high regard for family and spiritual values, a deep sense of shared history and vision, community connectedness, and pride in African roots.

Some of the conclusions and recommendations offered at the symposium follow:

- Participants advocated for development of an alcohol and other drug curriculum for higher education that reflects the importance of spiritual values within the African American community, generally, and HBCUs, specifically. The history of African American people in North America, several participants emphasized, is steeped in faith traditions reinforced by generations and the central social role of the church.
- The alcohol industry, particularly beer and malt liquor producers, must be convinced to stop marketing their products through events such as the Freaknik (the annual black college spring break in Atlanta) and to refrain from employing imagery that denigrates women.
- Colleges and universities should expand their strong ties with the communities in which they are situated. Through work study, internships, and other forms of service learning—in which HBCUs have excelled—campuses can provide needed legal, health-care, educational, cultural, and recreational services to residents living nearby. Cited as a prime example was community reinvestment underway at Prairie View A&M University and Texas Southern University, both in the Houston region; Jackson State University in Mississippi; Clark Atlanta University; and the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Those campuses are leading housing and economic development efforts that also diminish drug trafficking in surrounding neighborhoods.

HBCUs play an important role in U.S. higher education, Nettles said. For example, he pointed out that these schools dominate the ranks of campuses awarding degrees in mathematics (8 of 10 top producers are HBCUs) and chemistry to black students (9 of 10). Other speakers emphasized the leadership roles that HBCU graduates have assumed at all levels.

The Higher Education Center convened the meeting with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Look for an announcement of the symposium proceedings on the Center's Website (www.edc.org/hec/).

National Meeting—Register Today!



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Focus on North Dakota and Nebraska

Edited by Regional Coordinator Deb Walker,
Northern State University, Aberdeen, South Dakota

University of Nebraska at Lincoln Implements Alcohol Skills Training Program

Network member University of Nebraska at Lincoln has adopted the Alcohol Skills Training Program (ASTP) developed by the Addictive Behaviors Research Center located on the campus of the University of Washington in Seattle.

"This came about following a thorough review of the most recent literature and campus-based practices," says Linda Major, UNL alcohol and drug program coordinator. "Our Health Center interim director requested that we investigate and recommend a campus-based support service plan for students presenting with substance abuse issues and we liked the strong evaluation research at UW."

UW clinicians found that brief interventions aimed at heavy-drinking college and university students can reduce the amount they drink, the frequency of their drinking, and the number of alcohol-related problems they experience. The success of this strategy is significant given that recent research indicates that 25 percent of the college-age population will be adversely affected by their use of alcohol.

The Alcohol Skills Training Program is based on the following three assumptions:

- Many students lack important information and coping skills to drink moderately.
- Certain developmental milestones contribute to heavy drinking.
- Personal and environmental factors inhibit the use of behavioral skills that the student has.

ASTP applies many of the principles commonly associated with relapse prevention. The program is based on the following eight harm reduction principles:

- Identify high-risk drinking situations
- Provide accurate information about alcohol
- Identify personal risk factors
- Challenge myths and positive alcohol expectancies
- Establish appropriate and safer drinking goals
- Manage high-risk drinking situations
- Learn from mistakes

- Attain lifestyle balance

Studies of the program conclude that, on the average, participants report reductions in drinking and alcohol-related problems compared with control conditions at one year and two-year follow-ups.

At UNL, students are referred to the ASTP by a number of campus or community sources, including, but not limited to, Judicial Affairs, Housing, Greek Affairs, Health Center health care providers, faculty or staff, campus-based counselors, the athletics department, or student legal services.

"Once the program is fully operational, it is anticipated that students referred for services because of a campus violation or legal sanction will be assessed the actual cost of the service," says Major. "Students receiving a non-sanction-related referral or requesting services out of a personal concern for drinking and drugging behavior, will be assessed an amount significantly reduced and subsidized through student fees."

"We align all of our staff by training them in this approach," adds Major. "In that way, there is consistency across campus and everyone is on the same page."

For more information, contact Linda Major at (402) 472-7400.

Program Highlight: The North Dakota Campus Violence Project

It's about dignity.

It's about power.

It's about love.

It's about fear.

It's about peace.

It's about violence . . . too much violence.

The North Dakota Campus Violence Project (NDCVP) exists to prevent interpersonal violence and to promote healthy and empowered living among college students. Through education, policy change, and community mobilization, NDCVP addresses a range of problems—sexual, physical, and psychological abuse—committed by or against college students,

NETWORK OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES Committed To The Elimination Of Drug And Alcohol Abuse

especially among peers. Since 1991, this statewide organization of students and their supporters has focused on the 19 institutions of higher education within the state, including tribal, private, and state colleges and universities.

"We saw a need to work with the college population in the areas of sexual assault and dating violence and create linkages between community and university programs," said Bonnie Palecek, of the North Dakota Council on Abused Women's Services.

"Administrators also wanted to know how to meet the federal regulations."

In fall 1994 the first personal violence survey was conducted at 11 of North Dakota's institutions of higher education. The survey examined attitudes about aggression and sexual behavior, documented perceptions of the availability of campus and community resources, estimated the scope and salience of victimization, for males and females, before and during college, and both on and off campus. It gathered more detailed descriptive accounts of self-selected "most serious incidents" in order to investigate, among other things, the role of alcohol and the contexts and social situations in which North Dakota undergraduates continue to experience interpersonal violence.

"Of the women who reported being victimized, two-thirds had been victimized before coming to college," adds Palecek. "This information helped us to target incoming freshmen."

Grounded in the belief that college students have the personal resources needed to prevent personal violence, an annual peer education workshop trains teams of college women and men who want to create meaningful change on their campuses and in their communities through education, role modeling, and positive peer pressure. Of the 19 colleges and universities in the state, all but one has sent participants to a

the NETWORK

training session. A companion training-of-trainers builds the expertise and resourcefulness of those who train students in violence prevention.

NDCVP's new Website features an interactive campus violence quiz, local crisis centers' phone numbers, a wealth of topics on which browsers can "click" to track their specific area of interest, and the sexual assault policies from all North Dakota colleges and universities.

The North Dakota Campus Violence Project has worked diligently to bring home the federal Campus Security Act of 1990, which requires that colleges and universities that receive Title IV student aid assistance develop and distribute clear and consistent policies to address sexual assault. Passed in 1995, the North Dakota Concurrent Resolution 3019 urges North Dakota colleges and universities to develop such policies and provide needed support for student survivors of sexual assault.

This year, the project rallied around a bill on Rohypnol possession. Supporters led a telephone call-in campaign culminating in a bill that passed both houses by an overwhelming majority, raising possession of Rohypnol to the criminal status of heroine possession, with increased penalties for possession near school and college grounds.

College personnel are now trained in a special seminar called Adjudicating Cases of Alleged Sexual Assault which includes a mock case from the accuser's first effort to seek campus resources to final decision making on the part of the judicial board.

For more information, contact Bonnie Palecek at (701) 255-6420 or on the Web at <http://www.btigate.com/~endabuse>

How to Join the Network

To join the Network, the president of your college or university must submit a letter or form indicating the institution's commitment to implement the Network's Standards on your campus. Mail this letter of endorsement to:

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458-1060
or e-mail to: HigherEdCtr@edc.org
or fax to: 617-928-1537

In addition, please include the name, address, and phone number of the contact person for the institution. The Network is committed to assisting member institutions find workable solutions to promote a healthy campus environment by decreasing alcohol and other drug abuse.

Network Coordinators Advance Public Policy Objectives

Greater federal support for prevention in higher education settings and reduced media exposure to alcohol advertising during intercollegiate sports were policy objectives Network leadership had in mind at its first meeting of 1998. In two separate actions, Network regional coordinators determined the following:

- To support a line-item authorization for federal support of alcohol, other drug, and violence prevention within the pending Higher Education Act amendments of 1998. Under current law, now up for congressional reauthorization, the Department of Education, at the discretion of the Secretary of Education, allocates Safe and Drug-Free School Program resources to benefit students in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions.

While coordinators expressed gratitude for such allocations in the past in the form of limited grant making and the Higher Education Center, they concluded that circumstances now warrant explicit line-item visibility. Especially so, they reasoned, in light of recent alcohol-related deaths and growing congressional attention, for example, from Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) and Representatives Joseph Kennedy (D-MA) and Nita Lowey (D-NY).

- To endorse a call by Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services, for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to revisit its policies on alcohol advertising and intercollegiate sports. Earlier in the year, at the 92d NCAA convention, Secretary Shalala urged Division I members to adopt voluntary restrictions on beer and wine advertising at college sporting events and on TV and radio broadcasts of college games. Chair Chuck Cychosz, Ph.D., also dispatched copies of the Shalala endorsement letter to Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Director Karol Kumpfer, Ph.D.; Education Secretary Richard Riley; and Assistant Secretary of Education for Elementary and Secondary Education Gerald N. Tirozzi.

NEW!

Higher Education Center Publications

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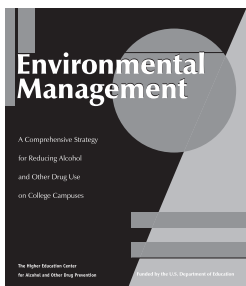
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Most of our publications are downloadable from our Website: www.edc.org/hec/

Check our Website also for training opportunities, news, and links. Or call us at **(800) 676-1730**.

Environmental Management: A Comprehensive Strategy for Reducing Alcohol and Other Drug Use on College Campuses

Articulating the underlying philosophy of the Higher Education Center,



Environmental Management presents a comprehensive strategy based on lessons learned from prevention research, public health, and case law. It examines the three spheres of action in which to work for environmental change: the campus task force, the campus and community coalition, and associations of higher education officials. The conceptual

framework presented here is designed to help college officials understand the wisdom of broadening their approach beyond traditional prevention programs to include a range of strategies that will change the campus and community environment in which students are making decisions about drinking and other drug use. 38 pp.

Drinking on Campus: Can Colleges Get It Under Control?

CQ Researcher (March 20, 1998, Volume 8, No. 11) looks at the various aspects of drinking on college campuses: the issues; the background (control efforts, precollege drinking, parents' role, and banning alcohol ads); the current situation (focus on education, community outreach, drinking and driving, and legislative initiatives); and the outlook for the future, which describes new approaches needed. This reprint of a Congressional Quarterly Inc. report also includes a list of organizations and selected resources. 24 pp.

Alcohol and Other Drugs: Prevention Challenges at Community Colleges

National surveys at all types of institutions of higher education have found that



community college students and those attending four-year colleges differ in a number of areas, including social demographics and alcohol and other drug use and related problems. Because community colleges are so closely linked to the communities they serve, AOD prevention strategies that are based on collaborations and coalitions with organizations, institutions, and busi-

nesses are likely to yield the most successful outcomes. This guide takes a look at the specific challenges community colleges face and provides strategies for preventing problems. Among the practices described are policy development, implementation, and enforcement; responsible hosting; community coalitions; and the use of social marketing, mass media, and media advocacy to gain a voice for prevention. 32 pp.



Extra! Extra! Get all the latest news in your e-mailbox!

HECNews is an electronic mailing list to which Center staff will daily send news items on alcohol and other drug prevention in higher education. To subscribe to the list, send an e-mail message (the message does not need a subject line) to majordomo@mail.edc.org with the following text in the body of the message: **subscribe HECNews**

Report from the Field . . . continued

follow-up to generate a good response rate; (2) resources are needed to enhance the capabilities of the Core Institute so that, using a random sample of colleges and universities, it can present an annual national portrait of college student AOD use, consequences and perceptions; (3) the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) could be modified to identify college students involved in alcohol-related traffic crashes; (4) other national injury and criminal

justice reporting systems may also need to be modified to help monitor the destructive impact of alcohol and other drug use by college students; (5) colleges and universities need to develop systems for routinely collecting information from campus security, health services, housing, and other departments regarding alcohol- and other drug-related problems so that schools can use that information to monitor their overall effectiveness in reducing AOD-related problems; (6) all student surveys should be expanded to explore the times

and circumstances of high-risk drinking; and (7) the taxonomy developed by Andris Ziemelis, Ed.D., of the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse, needs to be updated to account for new types of campus- and community-based efforts.

Our Mission

The mission of the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention is to assist institutions of higher education in developing alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention policies and programs that will foster students' academic and social development and promote campus and community safety.

Get in Touch

Additional information can be obtained by contacting:

The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention

Education Development Center, Inc.

55 Chapel Street

Newton, MA 02458-1060

Website: www.edc.org/hec/

Phone: 800-676-1730

Fax: 617-928-1537

E-mail: HigherEdCtr@edc.org

How We Can Help

The Center offers an integrated array of services to help people at colleges and universities adopt effective AOD prevention strategies:

- Training and professional development activities
- Resources, referrals, and consultations
- Publication and dissemination of prevention materials
- Support for the Network of Colleges and Universities
Committed to the Elimination of Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Assessment, evaluation, and analysis activities

Higher Education Center Training Opportunities

The Center's two-day Team Training event brings together teams from IHEs and their local communities to address alcohol and other drug issues on their campus. Team members represent key campus and community systems such as AOD coordinators, senior administrators, faculty, other student service personnel, athletes, public safety/security, student leaders, community representatives, and others. The training provides an opportunity for teams to learn the best practice for coalition-based environmental approaches to prevention. Call the Center to participate in one of the following events.

Upcoming Team Trainings

September 16–17, 1998 • Worcester, Mass.

November 11–12, 1998 • Stevens Point, Wisc.

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